

## **SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**BJ's Restaurant  
990 N. Center Street  
Gaylord, Michigan  
May 2, 2008**

**Chairman Wheatlake** called the meeting of the Snowmobile Advisory Committee (SAC) to order at 9:58a.m., Friday, May 2, 2008, in Gaylord, Michigan.

### **Members Present:**

Frank Wheatlake, Chair, Business and Community Representative, Reed City  
Bill Manson, Region III, Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA), Grand Rapids  
Bill Lucas, Region II, MSA, Cadillac  
Lee Murray, At-Large, Hopkins  
Orville Olson, Representative at Large, Ludington  
Jim Duke, Region I MSA, Munising  
Richard Filley, Trail Sponsors Representative, Grayling

### **Ex-Officio Members Present:**

Randy Charles, USDA, Ottawa National Forest  
Rose Ingram, Huron-Manistee National Forest  
Capt. Tom Courchaine, Law Enforcement Division (LED), Marquette  
Cpl. Andrew Turner, LED, Lansing

### **Staff Present:**

Lynne Boyd, Chief, FMFM, Lansing  
Jim Radabaugh, State Trails Coordinator, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management (FMFM), Lansing  
Steve DeBrabander, State Trails Unit Manager, FMFM, Lansing  
William O'Neill, FMFM, Gaylord  
Mike Paluda, FMFM, Marquette  
Loretta Cwalinski, FMFM, Gaylord

**Chairman Wheatlake** introduced himself and Richard Filley as new appointees to the Snowmobile Advisory Committee, and welcomed everyone. The Committee, DNR staff and the audience introduced themselves.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the February 5, 2008 SAC meeting were acknowledged.

**Motion was made by Mr. Duke, seconded by Mr. Manson, to adopt the minutes as corrected of the February 5, 2008 meeting. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Bylaws** -- **Mr. Wheatlake** asked the Committee if they have ever discussed bylaws, and **Mr. Murray** said they have opposed them in the past, and continue to oppose.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked **Ms. Boyd** if there is anything in statute referencing bylaws, there is not. **Mr. Radabaugh** added that there are no provisions for adding bylaws, but that all advisory committees follow them. **Mr. Olson** said that the majority of the Committee has serious concerns, and would like further discussion. They are not adverse to structure, but to some of the wording.

**Mr. Manson** added that Article 6 Section 1 is the only real issue he has, specifically; who's 'cause'? The removal of Committee members is the concern. Under statute, the Director has the ability to hire and fire. **Mr. Lucas** said that he has a problem with the bylaws. He feels they're just another layer of rules, and the ones in place should be sufficient. **Mr. Filley** said he is remaining neutral. **Mr. Duke** said his concerns have already all been aired. Discussion will continue.

**Grooming Equipment** -- **Mr. Radabaugh** addressed the criteria for replacing grooming equipment and how the decision is made, and shared that information with the Committee. He also discussed the forms that are self reported from the clubs to staff on equipment requests and criteria. In addition, at this time all DNR groomers have been transferred over to the clubs.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked if this information is what the Committee has been wanting, and if there were any comments. **Mr. Murray** said that he likes the information submitted. Discussion continued.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked for clarification on the 60/40 split. **Mr. Radabaugh** explained the progression and ratios.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked why it's been the decision to buy and not lease. **Mr. Manson** said that after looking at the numbers it was not cost-effective. **Mr. Olson** explained the lifespan of hours and condition on equipment, and **Mr. Manson** added that certain equipment trade-in maximums drop at three years. This hasn't been revisited for about three years. Discussion continued on trade-ins, and depreciation.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked for clarification on what some of the equipment concerns are. **Mr. Manson** said that some of the clubs are asking why they are denied new equipment. **Mr. Radabaugh** said that staff takes the information from the club's reports, and reviews conditions of the overall fleet. **Mr. Manson** would like to see specifics on how those decisions are made, and what the criteria were and would also like to see the spreadsheet staff refers to.

**Mr. Manson** added that they want to be able to tell the clubs exactly why they've been denied equipment, and the exact information has never been available. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked **Mr. Manson** if he is satisfied with the information that has been submitted today and if it is the information he is looking for. **Mr. Manson** agreed that it is.

**Mr. Manson** said he feels that looking into leasing options doesn't seem like a good idea and doesn't want to see it narrowed down to one company, he wants to have flexibility.

Discussion continued with **Mr. Radabaugh** saying that staff can look into the details of leasing further.

**Final Reimbursement Requests** -- **Mr. Radabaugh** referred to a letter from Senator Tony Stamas' office that is attached to the Committee's packet – all pieces of grooming equipment have been identified and are accounted for. **Mr. Radabaugh** added that the Snowmobile Equipment Status Reports were due April 15, and thanked everyone for them. Final grooming reports are still coming in. **Mr. Radabaugh** had advised **Mr. Wheatlake** about some coming in late and **Mr. Wheatlake** asked if the due dates are reasonable. **Mr. Manson** said he thinks the dates are fine. Next week there will be a reminder sent. Staff will e-mail the clubs May 10<sup>th</sup> to make sure as many are in as possible.

**Law Enforcement Grants** -- **Capt. Courchaine** said that Law Division has undergone several staff changes lately, but are filling many vacant positions. Historically they have not approved 800 MHz radio purchases through the snowmobile grant fund, mainly since they are not used exclusively for snowmobile patrols as snowmobiles and helmets are. He would like to see the grant percentage be applied to other uses as well throughout the year.

**Mr. Murray** said that the primary reason for the request was for safety. **Capt. Courchaine** said that he thinks it does meet the statute requirements to even prorate usage from the snowmobile program. They don't want to get it mixed up with any other expenditure like uniforms or sidearm purchases. A good timeframe agreed upon is the official snowmobile season.

**Mr. Manson** said that he heard from a few sheriffs that did not get their full refund requested and voiced concerns over their 85/15 match, and the timeframe of having to make a second request at the end of the season, which ends up being too late for reimbursements. **Mr. Radabaugh** explained that those law enforcement grants are issued based on the last three years' expenditure averages. Discussion continued.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked for an explanation of the problem on the process of averaging. **Mr. Manson** said if the process was simpler, it would be OK. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked if **Mr. Manson** couldn't recommend to the sheriffs to expedite their process, realizing the Department's issues. **Mr. Manson** asked why the Department can't just change their process. **Mr. Radabaugh** said they will take the request back to Grants.

**Mr. Murray** added that it may have been corrected by now, but he mentioned Allegan County's Sheriff did not get their grant until January. That has been addressed, but he's not sure if it's been taken care of yet or not.

**Ms. Boyd** added that this year has been unique due to the ongoing budget issues, and all grants were affected.

**Ms. Boyd** asked if the Committee wants a resolution written for law enforcement grants, should there be a formal request. **Mr. Wheatlake** doesn't feel a resolution is quite necessary. **Ms. Boyd** said it was brought up in an auditing process that all the monies weren't used up from what was requested. Discussion continued.

**Mr. Wheatlake** requested staff to go back to Grants, and ask them to figure out the problem, with extended seasons etc. and County Sheriffs needing money.

**Trail Proposals -- Mr. DeBrabander** explained the trail proposal process. Anyone can submit a proposal, but work with the local contact to initiate it. He added that other divisions review the proposals as well such as Fisheries and Wildlife staff, and then the proposal is submitted to Lansing. Sometimes information is incomplete and might need to be sent back to the field. There are many signatures required. He also added that there are other trail proposals that staff review as well, ORV, hiking trails etc. **Mr. DeBrabander** mentioned one trail proposal in particular that OLAF is handling because there are land ownership issues.

**Mr. DeBrabander** said that staff has been working on a comprehensive database to track the proposal electronically. Documents will be scanned and completely electronic. Within about a month, it will be tested, and soon after put into use for tracking. Even automatic e-mail notification will be set up to any involved divisions etc. In addition, mapping will be made easier. This database also generates a monthly report that will be put on the Department's website.

Rogers City North trail proposal has been approved, the connector trail that provides direct access to Rogers City.

**Mr. Olson** wanted to add that one of the complaints they've received are that there are timelines when the clubs need to turn in their paperwork, but there are none for the Department. Sometimes a proposal can sit in someone's box for a month, particularly if they are on vacation or fire issues out west.

**Mr. DeBrabander** said that one option is that the information will be entered in by local field contacts or Recreation Specialists; they want it to be the most efficient and consistent for everyone involved. Or the information be sent in to Lansing, and entered and tracked from there. **Mr. DeBrabander** said that within two months it should be up and running. **Mr. Manson** said that's great news to track where the holdup is.

**Mr. Wheatlake** acknowledged that there are snags within the Department, but a large problem is they are highly under-staffed and obvious budget concerns as well. The hope is to have more workers and fewer bosses and to be more responsive. The Department needs to be more proactive and disseminate information on a timely basis.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked what dates are the most effective for everyone and asked for suggestions. **Mr. Manson** said that a meeting after all the information is collected from grant sponsors is important – from a funding and equipment standpoint – that is compiled by the end of May; therefore a June meeting is good. **Mr. Radabaugh** agreed for an early June meeting.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked about October – **Mr. Lucas** said that's a good time because of budget talks. Later in October is good. Typically earlier December in the Upper Peninsula works, it's a good time for snow, and matches with MSA meeting. **Ms. Boyd** said it's a fiscal issue, but shouldn't be a problem once a year in the UP.

February meeting is good due to issues of equipment concerns etc. and it's after the season's started. Middle February is good.

**Mr. Duke** said he thinks the June meeting should be the latter part of the month. **Mr. Wheatlake** agreed. The Committee agreed that the April meeting is functional as well; however **Mr. Radabaugh** said that it's a little early because they are still waiting on reports coming in from the clubs. **Mr. Wheatlake** wants five meetings, all agreed. The weekday preference is to not be on Monday or Friday. **Mr. Manson** asked for the 11<sup>th</sup> in December.

**2008-2009 Snowmobile Grant Handbook** -- **Mr. DeBrabander** advised that last year there were a few changes. The Department has received a few comments and just received clarification on those proposed changes; only three changes so far. The Department is reviewing those changes. Staff will meet and within two weeks will provide a draft version to the Committee.

**Mr. Wheatlake** said this approval process can be done electronically, and the Committee agreed it has worked in the past.

**Ms. Boyd** asked when there should be a final deadline for the changes to be made. The Committee can review in a few weeks and recommend any changes at that time. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked that if he is gone at that time, to not have a 3-3 tie!

**Financial Report -- Audit** - **Mr. Radabaugh** said they are supplying the Committee a copy of the audit that was conducted from 2002-2003. **Mr. Radabaugh** noted several reportable conditions; from a lack of written Department policy to inadequate monitoring of grooming maintenance work performed. Several remedies from staff were noted.

**Trail Permits** – **Mr. Radabaugh** shared the License Control data. As of April 30, 2008 180,546 trail permits were sold. Sales have incrementally declined over the years. The pre-printed permits will increase that by about 15,000. He also added that registrations of snowmobiles have declined as well. Discussion continued.

**FMFM Budget** – **Mr. Radabaugh** discussed the snowmobile trail improvements – he presented 2007 numbers. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked if these were actual numbers, or appropriated, they are actual. **Mr. Radabaugh** added that snowmobile funding and law enforcement grants to county sheriffs have not been included.

**Ms. Boyd** interjected that she would like to discuss the 2008 budget – they are looking into lapsing \$400,000 from the budget since the Department is no longer grooming. Signs and posts should be moved to a grant line, since those go to the trails, it's not a Department administrative cost. This will be a legislative approval. This could be available for equipment purchases. Department's recommendation is to lapse the \$400,000. **Mr. Wheatlake** wanted to discuss the Department's administrative fees, and how efficient they are. **Ms. Boyd** explained the expense procedure to track all the various expenses to FMFM. **Mr. Manson** asked about the cost allocation – is it the whole improvement fund? This is based on the total appropriation. The cost allocation is in the Snowmobile Improvement Fund (percentage will be the cost allocation).

**Mr. Manson** wanted clarification, excluding the \$400,000, what the unallocated funds were. **Ms. Boyd** said \$633,000, but it's not a final number since all numbers are not in.

**Mr. Radabaugh** said that they are still getting amendments in from grant sponsors. **Mr. Manson** said he feels they should buy equipment with this money. He would like to see it discussed over e-mail when all those numbers are in.

**Mr. Olson** said he feels the money should be put in this year's budget to be used to buy equipment. **Mr. Murray** said he does not have an opinion at this time. **Mr. Duke** said he agrees with **Mr. Olson**, equipment and special maintenance. **Mr. Filley** asked what happens if the money lapses - it will be put into the snowmobile fund for next year's 2009-2010 budget as an equipment line.

**Mr. Manson** feels it should be used now, and wants the Department to start that process. **Mr. Radabaugh** said June is realistic for the total funds available for the equipment.

**Mr. Manson** said they are still working on a fee change and to have in place for next season. **Mr. Wheatlake** said that the Governor has specifically said no increases. **Mr. Manson** is still working on backing in the legislature, and the snowmobilers. **Ms. Boyd** is looking for the recommendation from the SAC – support of spending this fiscal year. **Mr. Filley** does not support everyone one stated they do. **Mr. Manson** said if there is not a fee increase, \$400,000 is not a lot of money. There will be cutbacks on all grooming related activities. **Ms. Boyd** will request the transfer.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked **Mr. Manson** if there is a doubling of fees. **Mr. Manson** said they are recommending the increase from \$25 to \$35 immediately. They recommended a discount if purchased before the season as well. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked if the information and request they submitted were broken down line by line for further clarification of detail. **Mr. Manson** said they are still collecting additional data. It was suggested that the figures show what is benefited and how long the additional revenue will last with the \$10 permit increase. **Mr. Olson** said they have gathered the numbers, and the recommendation was to have Department staff validate that information. The Department can provide information, but not necessarily support their increase.

**Ms. Boyd** added it should be able to be done this month.

**Mr. Radabaugh** addressed fuel costs saying that the rate that was set for fuel this year appears to be covering what the costs that have been turned in so far, but they are still receiving more requests. \$4.61 was set for this year. Fuel costs were \$1.94 per mile. Discussion continued for clarification of averages. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked to have **Mr. Radabaugh** send the formula used for reimbursement to the Committee.

**Committee Comments** -- **Mr. Lucas** commented that the Ogemaw Hills club has not been notified on the Marl Lake change that was reported last week as approved. When all signatures have been obtained, documents will be scanned and e-mailed out. Lansing office has been short on clerical support, and there has been a delay in the scanning of documents. **Mr. Radabaugh** does have a new secretary as of last week.

**Mr. Lucas** also asked about the Petoskey re-route where the bridge was out. The club and Don Klingler are still discussing, but not sure if the bridge should be replaced or not. **Mr. Lucas** said that Mr. Klingler advised that it will be a re-route. **Mr. Lucas** would like to see it open by fall. **Mr. O'Neill** will find out and e-mail **Mr. Lucas** that information.

**Mr. Wheatlake** questioned about the scanning urgency and pointed out that someone could have picked up the phone to advise of the status.

**Mr. Duke** talked about the map he handed out for a trail in the Grand Marais area. They are looking at a re-route. When Trail 8 is paved, there is a strong possibility of losing the trail.

**Mr. Manson** asked if at the green portion of the trail, could there be a request for hikers and bikers to use it in the summer, and as a snowmobile trail in the winter. **Mr. Reed** advised that if that section gets closed off due to no plowing, Trail 8 will be off the map. Discussion continued. **Mr. Duke** said that Dan Moore advised that in 2000 when Doty Bridge was condemned, there were absolutely no other choices for snowmobile travel, but then at the last moment, there was an alternate found. **Mr. Duke** feels that the bridge replacement should be pursued. He added that there are a few other trails that are ORV trails, and perhaps get this cost-shared to get the bridge replaced.

**Mr. Paluda** said that in Alger County the Road Commission has been asking them to keep off H15, and threatening to close it down. The cheapest simplest way is to harden that surface, but the Road Commission doesn't seem to agree.

**Mr. Radabaugh** said that those roads are already open to ORV use. The USFS can submit a request for funding, because whether it's a 'designated' ORV trail or not, doesn't matter. Funding can be granted to the USFS on their land as well. **Mr. Olson** asked about Trail 8 again, and **Mr. Radabaugh** clarified for USFS to ask for ORV funds. **Mr. Wheatlake** encouraged snowmobilers to make their voices heard to their representatives in the UP.

**Mr. Olson** asked **Mr. Dingman, Trailriders Snowmobile Club** if there's information about the 56<sup>th</sup> bridge re-route. He said that it is moving at a very slow pace and wishes he could get some assistance to move it along faster. This seems to be a USFS problem. **Ms. Ingram** said there is a tremendous amount of mixed ownership, but added it's close to being resolved.

**Mr. Manson** said that he would appreciate the Recreation Specialist's reports ahead of time, at least a few days ahead of the meeting, for review. **Ms. Boyd** added that that can be done.

**Mr. Duke** said that in Dan Moore's report it mentions the two-day ride in the UP –he wanted to thank **Mr. Paluda** and **Mr. Moore** for pulling this together, and for the attendance. It was very worthwhile.

**Mr. Filley** commented that he has concerns over the equipment information and asked if there is an inventory of all the equipment. **Mr. Radabaugh** said there is, but only the program equipment, not any purchased privately. There are 159 machines. **Mr. Manson** added that there is a detailed sheet available.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked about Alanson to Indian River. **Mr. O'Neill** said there's been a lot of effort working on it, and they're looking for a new route. He said that Ms. Emily Meyerson, trail's contractor, is also assisting. **Mr. Wheatlake** added that it is in terrible shape.

**Mr. Filley** said he would like to see the entire inventory list of equipment. This is a normal report that is provided every summer. This will be provided.

**Mr. Wheatlake** wanted to make a point that extending the grooming season in the UP worked, and that was a positive thing.

**US Forest Service Report -- Mr. Charles** said they have a new Regional Forester, Kent Connaughton, and he has recognized support in the snowmobile program. Patrol numbers were tripled last year in the UP in Ottawa and Hiawatha with accidents significantly down. They have also received positive feedback from the public on the additional patrols.

**Ms. Ingram** reported the M-65 Bridge proposal is still with Iosco County Parks and Recreation. The District has still not had any report on that. **Mr. Radabaugh** will get with **Ms. Ingram** to see what can be worked out. **Mr. Manson** said his contact advised that there has been no discussion on it. It appears that everyone has given permission, so it should be ready to go. **Mr. Wheatlake** asked **Mr. Manson** if he couldn't get Representative Sheltroun involved to help, and get it on their agenda at the Iosco County Board. This will also be on June's agenda.

**Law Enforcement -- Cpl. Turner** reported on the snowmobile fatalities from last season; there were a total of 24 with one double fatality. Nine were alcohol related. 19 males, 16 had snowmobile safety courses, median age was 33. **Mr. Duke** asked if the out of state numbers could be calculated, there were three non-residents.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Mr. Gallagher, St. Helen Snowpackers** mentioned the Prudenville ORV/snowmobile trail bridge; Todd Neiss' report had a little information last month but wondered will it be done in time for snowmobile season? Since it's a combined trail, there should be money from both sources. Also, Old 76 underpass, underneath the expressway the partial fencing has not been completed. He is concerned that portion will be shut down unless people are kept off the slopes. **Mr. Lucas** asked if anyone has contacted the highway department. He asked that Mr. Gallagher send him the details, and Mr. Lucas will handle it.

**Mr. Wood, Jordan Valley Trails** referenced the spare groomers - he feels the Department doesn't want them to have any of those extra groomers. Also, he would like to know about how much each of the signs cost. It would help to pass along to the public the cost of signs. That will be posted on the website. Regarding fuel costs and reimbursements, he knows there's clubs that do a poor job of reporting, does that skew the figures the Department uses in order to be correct for grooming trail reimbursements? Also, he said he agreed about the issue of the ordering for equipment. Lastly, on missing equipment referenced a tractor that was purchased with 100 percent funds, and traded in for a new tractor, where is the new tractor? The John Deere in Gaylord that was not replaced, but sold - what happened to that money?

**Mr. Wheatlake** said that the information the Committee has can be shared. **Ms. Boyd** gave that information to Mr. Wood. If Mr. Wood needs to, he can get back with Mr. DeBrabander if that does not answer his concerns.



**Mr. Manson** thanked Jordan Valley Council for taking over the Department's trails as well.

**Mr. Gallagher** added that he wanted the Prudenville bridge to be 14' wide and not 12'.

**Mr. Marzean, Alpena Snowmobile Club** questioned the tractor that is in Onaway. He said it was traded in for a John Deere, and wants to know where the \$41,000 is. He also asked about another one that was sold in October to Sure Track. In addition, regarding grooming drags, he feels there are five that are missing, and asked about the Duby tractor that had been sitting in Onaway all winter. The two 8' drags, one in Atlanta and one perhaps in Onaway was promised to be used, but it is not available. Last, he added that all equipment should be sold at auction.

**Ms. Boyd** said that in the letter presented it explains the entire inventory, drags and all. All funds were dispersed back to the program. Discussion continued.

**Mr. Manson** added that if the \$41,000 is in the tractor, either put the money or the tractor back in the program. **Ms. Boyd** clarified by reading the letter of explanation as to the status of this tractor.

**Mr. Jones, Gaylord resident and MSA member** tried to clarify that Gaylord purchased that tractor with 60/40 split and was used for five years. That was based on the rules in place at the time.

**Mr. Wheatlake** can ask for an audit and it will be requested.

**Mr. Houk, Presque Isle Sno-Trails** wanted to thank the Department for the Rogers City connector. They also need an amendment for brushing and signing for this year's grant. There is an ongoing section at Black Mountain the Department was in process for reroute, is there any new information? The Department owns a railroad grade into Rogers City. Is there any new info on the land acquisition and a swap with the quarry? Lastly, on the fuel adjustment formula, it was based on average cost of fuel in the Midwest? That's how he thought the formula was based.

**Mr. DeBrabander** said that the Black Mountain reroute has been bid out. It does go through a wetland, but it's in design and engineering currently. This could take a year. Trail proposal has been approved, but it's not simple due to wetlands. **Mr. Wheatlake** would like a report at next meeting.

**Mr. DeBrabander** said of the Rogers City south, land specialists have been working with the owners of quarry (3<sup>rd</sup> new owners) and will meet onsite this spring. The route the Department owns goes right through the working portion of that quarry.

Staff will have the fuel formula posted on the website.

**Mr. Cottle, Sault Ste. Marie Snowmobile Association** asked about the reimbursement forms available electronically – is that process still in the works to submit them online? **Mr. DeBrabander** said that they will look into that process, and the improvement of the forms.

Also, **Mr. Cottle** wanted to point out that the public is unclear on details of documents discussed since they do not get all the handouts - just something to think about.

**Mr. Altman, Presque Isle Sno-Trails** asked about Department officers recently at Alpena Airport that were being trained on ORV's with snowmobile funds. **Capt. Courchaine** was not aware of that particular training but will look into it.

**Mr. Carroll, West Branch Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club** wanted to commend Mr. DeBrabander on requests, but asked about ½ the trails being completed last year. **Mr. DeBrabander** advised that those were 2007 proposals including equestrian, hiking, ORV etc.

**Mr. Martin, West Branch Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club** mentioned the Ambrose Lake project and State Forest campground and ORV trail. This is on the docket to tie into the trail system. Work will begin in about a year.

**Mr. Reed, President, Michigan Snowmobile Association** said that the Department ride in the UP was time well spent. Each contact person brought something different as input. He added to maybe look at putting in wood chips to make trails safer to run on. The extended season was a success as well. Trail data is a good thing for tracking and sharing. He feels that the trail permit fee increase has to be done. Snowmobiling will not exist the way it is now if not.

**Mr. Zoet, Western Michigan Snowmobile Council** wanted to ask about the new grant holder for Allegan Snowmobile Club and the Department furnishing them a new groomer. **Mr. DeBrabander** advised about the requirement that trail sponsors need to wait two years before funding. This trail sponsor was not brand new to the program as they'd already participated in the program for many years. The Department paid for leasing equipment for them. Discussion continued.

**Mr. Klaus, Thumbs Up Snowmobile Club, Deckerville**, said they are new and would like their equipment paid for also. **Mr. DeBrabander** clarified that being under another council was considered participating in the program.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked about the process, and is there deviation from that. **Ms. Boyd** clarified that yes, there is some subjectivity. The decision is in line with the policy.

**Mr. Manson** recalled that the Allegan club mentioned that they wanted to be on their own, the Committee did not agree with funding, but the Department did.

**Mr. Olson** asked about the policy on leasing equipment. **Mr. Radabaugh** said that the clubs have come forward and asked for leasing equipment. Discussion continued.

**Ms. Boyd** suggested again to revisit the wording in the handbook under how new club's equipment will or will not be funded. "Participate" needs to be clarified as interpretation and review is evidently causing the heartburn. **Mr. Wheatlake** said to put it on the June agenda, and bring suggestions.

**Mr. Wood** added that the certified forests and superstructures for bridges is too costly for reality. In their area, they have a bridge that needs replaced, which should normally be only used for ORV and snowmobile usage, but the standards say that the bridge

should be able to hold a logging truck. He would like to see if there's any way to get around the high cost of replacing bridges or culverts, replace for what they need, and not other users. He has a concern over proposals as well that sit n field offices untouched.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked about process for bridge replacement. **Mr. DeBrabander** advised that engineers look at the whole picture, all users, and they go for the appropriate funding.

**Mr. Manson** asked about Gaylord to Cheboygan trail and the Mullet Lake review. There is an internal review, Director review, and public meeting in June as well, not necessarily in that order. Getting positive letters of support from snowmobilers to legislators would be good.

**Mr. Wheatlake** asked that the public give the Department a heads-up on specific questions ahead of the meetings so answers can be better provided at the meetings.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for June 26 at 10:00 am at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM), 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon, Michigan.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

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### **Public Present:**

Dale Klaus, Thumb's Up Sno Club	Stu Volkers, Les Cheneaux Snow Club
Tony Guton, Les Cheneaux Snow Club	Jim Lingman, Trailriders Snow Club
George Zajac, Trailriders Snow Club	John Hensel, Gaylord Groomer's Club
Edwin Carlson, Chippewa Snow Chasers	Bob Gieseck, ACSC
Don Jones, Gaylord, MI & MSA member	Mark Dublin, Gaylord, MI & MSA member
Russ Kent, Elmira, MI & MSA member	Dave Cuzzort, Leota, MI Snow Club
Bud Martin, West Branch, Ogemaw Hills	Don Carroll, West Branch, Ogemaw Hills
David Demetookeus, West Branch, Ogemaw Hills	Eric Johnson, Canada Creek Ranch Assn.,
Brian Callaghan, Inland Lakes Snow Club	Kaye Houk, Presque Isle Sno-Trails
David Crockett	Michelle Harrier
Jerry Ryorman	Ron Fisk
Bradley Potter, Western MI Snow Council	Denny Zoet, Western MI Snow Council
JW Owen, Niles 4 Flags Club	Dave Baden, Southwest MI Snow Stompers
Bud Moerdyk, SMSC	Rolland Rieger, Presque Isle Sno-Trails
Rodney M. Altman, PI Sno-Trails	Larry Marzean, Alpena Snow Club
Ray Compeau, Alpen Snow Club	Dick Stehle, Benzie Manistee Snowbirds
Allen Cottle, Sault Ste Marie Snow Assoc.	Martin Cottle, Sault Ste. Marie Snow Assoc.
Andrew Kijawa, Gaylord	Rob Newton, Irons Area Tourist Assoc.
Jim Dickie, MSA	Bruce Wood, Jordan Valley Trails
Don Reed, MSA	Tom Gallagher, St. Helen Snowpackers

Bud Longroy, St. Helen Snowpackers	John Houk, Presque Isle Sno-Trails
David Low, West Michigan Snow Council	